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10 February 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chairman EDAC Executive Committee

FROM : CIA Member

SUBJECT : Provisional CIA Position on Downgrading of
CG/COCOM/CHINCOM Documents

1. A survey of CG/COCOM/CHINCOM documents has been undertaken in CIA (Economic Defense Division) in connection with the proposed downgrading of such documents from Secret to Confidential. All such documents in numbered series now are classified Secret. TOPOL 812 of 10 December 1954 indicated that Washington would provide within 90 days a list of COCOM and CHINCOM documents for which Secret classification should be retained.

2. The following categories of such documents have been identified and individual documents, issued prior to 31 December 1954, have been examined on the basis of criteria tentatively established by CIA for determining their classification:

- Consultative Group Papers
- COCOM Documents
- COCOM Statistics (S Series)
- COCOM Indexes (D Series)
- COCOM Secretariat Papers (Documents)
- COCOM Sub-C Series
- CHINCOM Documents
- CHINCOM Statistics (CH-S Series)
- CHINCOM Secretariat Papers
- CHINCOM Sub-C Series

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Insofar as CIA is concerned, no objection is interposed to downgrading from Secret to Confidential the following:

COCOM Statistics
COCOM Secretariat Papers (Documents)
COCOM Indexes (D Series)
CHINCOM Statistics
CHINCOM Secretariat Papers

3. It should be noted, however, that the foregoing five categories constitute only some 593 documents of the total of over 2,900 documents proposed for downgrading. A continuing survey is being made of the remaining five categories of documents and the Executive Committee will be advised of subsequent findings. Complications may arise which may require an extension beyond the 90-day deadline which, presumably, will expire on 10 March 1955.

4. In connection with this proposed downgrading, CIA is concerned that a uniform system of security classification does not exist within the COCOM/CHINCOM structure. The Agency is aware, however, of efforts being made in this direction (refs: Paris POLTO 1385, 22 January and Paris TOPOL 1066, 27 January 1955).

5. As an alternative to examination of individual documents and to accomplish "economy, greater speed transmission and greater ease and convenience storage and handling (of documents)...." (TOPOL 812),

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it is suggested that COCOM adopt a system under which documents issued prior to an agreed cut-off date would be reclassified either Secret or Confidential by categories on the basis of content. Thereafter, only certain types of information would be included in Secret and Confidential categories on the basis of criteria to be established by COCOM.

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D/E/RR:JAG:gg (10 February 1955)

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